

**HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM LEVELS**

**OCTOBER 2011**



## What should my child be able to do at each level?

### Reading

#### Level 1

Pupils recognise familiar words in simple texts. They use their knowledge of letters and sound-symbol relationships in order to read words and to establish meaning when reading aloud. In these activities they sometimes require support. They express their response to poems, stories and nonfiction by identifying aspects they like.

#### Level 2

Pupils' reading of simple texts shows understanding and is generally accurate. They express opinions about major events or ideas in stories, poems and nonfiction. They use more than one strategy, such as phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual, in reading unfamiliar words and establishing meaning.

#### Level 3

Pupils read a range of texts fluently and accurately. They read independently, using strategies appropriately to establish meaning. In responding to fiction and nonfiction they show understanding of the main points and express preferences. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and find information.

#### Level 4

In responding to a range of texts, pupils show understanding of significant ideas, themes, events and characters, beginning to use inference and deduction. They refer to the text when explaining their views. They locate and use ideas and information.

#### Level 5

Pupils show understanding of a range of texts, selecting essential points and using inference and deduction where appropriate. In their responses, they identify key features, themes and characters and select sentences, phrases and relevant information to support their views. They retrieve and collate information from a range of sources.

### Writing

#### Level 1

Pupils' writing communicates meaning through simple words and phrases. In their reading or their writing, pupils begin to show awareness of how full stops are used. Letters are usually clearly shaped and correctly orientated.

#### Level 2

Pupils' writing communicates meaning in both narrative and non-narrative forms, using appropriate and interesting vocabulary, and showing some awareness of the reader. Ideas are developed in a sequence of sentences, sometimes demarcated by capital letters and full stops. Simple, monosyllabic words are usually spelt correctly, and where there are inaccuracies the alternative is phonetically plausible. In handwriting, letters are accurately formed and consistent in size.

#### Level 3

Pupils' writing is often organised, imaginative and clear. The main features of different forms of writing are used appropriately, beginning to be adapted to different readers. Sequences of sentences extend ideas logically and words are chosen for variety and interest. The basic grammatical structure of sentences is usually correct. Spelling is usually accurate, including that of common, polysyllabic words. Punctuation to mark sentences - full stops, capital letters and question marks - is used accurately. Handwriting is joined and legible.

#### Level 4

Pupils' writing in a range of forms is lively and thoughtful. Ideas are often sustained and developed in interesting ways and organised appropriately for the purpose of the reader. Vocabulary choices are often adventurous and words are used for effect. Pupils are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences, extending meaning. Spelling, including that of polysyllabic words that conform to regular patterns, is generally accurate. Full stops, capital letters and question marks are used correctly, and pupils are beginning to use punctuation within the sentence. Handwriting style is fluent, joined and legible.

#### Level 5

Pupils' writing is varied and interesting, conveying meaning clearly in a range of forms for different readers, using a more formal style where appropriate. Vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. Simple and complex sentences are organised into paragraphs. Words with complex regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. A range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is usually used accurately. Handwriting is joined, clear and fluent and, where appropriate, is adapted to a range of tasks.

### Number

#### Level 1

Pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers when solving problems involving up to 10 objects. They read and write the numbers involved.

#### Level 2

Pupils count sets of objects reliably, and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10. They begin to understand the place value of each digit in a number and use this to order numbers up to 100. They choose the appropriate operation when solving addition and subtraction problems. They use the knowledge that subtraction is the inverse of addition. They use mental calculation strategies to solve number problems involving money and measures. They recognise sequences of numbers, including odd and even numbers.

#### Level 3

Pupils show understanding of place value in numbers up to 1000 and use this to make approximations. They begin to use decimal notation and to recognise negative numbers, in contexts such as money and temperature. Pupils use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 in solving problems involving larger numbers. They add and subtract numbers with two digits mentally and numbers with three digits using written methods. They use mental recall of the 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 multiplication tables and derive the associated division facts. They solve whole-number problems involving multiplication or division, including those that give rise to remainders. They use simple fractions that are several parts of a whole and recognise when two simple fractions are equivalent.

#### Level 4

Pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100. In solving number problems, pupils use a range of mental methods of computation with the four operations, including mental recall of multiplication facts up to  $10 \times 10$  and quick derivation of corresponding division facts. They use efficient written methods of addition and subtraction and of short multiplication and division. They add and subtract decimals to two places and order decimals to three places. In solving problems with or without a calculator, pupils check the reasonableness of their results by reference to their knowledge of the context or to the size of the numbers. They recognise approximate proportions of a whole and use simple fractions and percentages to describe these. Pupils recognise and describe number patterns, and relationships including multiple, factor and square. They begin to use simple formulae expressed in words. Pupils use and interpret coordinates in the first quadrant.

#### Level 5

Pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. They order, add and subtract negative numbers in context. They use all four operations with decimals to two places. They reduce a fraction to its simplest form by cancelling common factors and solve simple problems involving ratio and direct proportion. They calculate fractional or percentage parts of quantities and measurements, using a calculator where appropriate. Pupils understand and use an appropriate non-calculator method for solving problems that involve multiplying and dividing any three-digit number by any two-digit number. They check their solutions by applying inverse operations or estimating using approximations. They construct, express in symbolic form, and use simple formulae involving one or two operations. They use brackets appropriately. Pupils use and interpret coordinates in all four quadrants.

## How can I help at home?

### Helping your child with reading

Reading with your child is vital. Research shows that it's the single most important thing you can do to help your child's education. It's best to read little and often, so try to put aside some time for it every day. Think of ways to make reading fun - you want your child to learn how pleasurable books can be. If you're both enjoying talking about the content of a particular page, linger over it for as long as you like. Books aren't just about reading the words on the page, they can also present new ideas and topics for you and your child to discuss.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy books:

- Encourage your child to pretend to 'read' a book before he or she can read words.
- Visit the library as often as possible - take out CDs and DVDs as well as books.
- Schedule a regular time for reading - perhaps when you get home from school or just before bed.
- Buy dual-language books if English isn't your family's first language - you can talk about books and stories, and develop a love for them, in any language.
- Look for books on topics that you know your child is interested in - maybe dragons, insects, cookery or a certain sport.
- Make sure that children's books are easily accessible in different rooms around your house.

### Helping your child with writing

Writing is a vital means of communication. Everyday life provides many opportunities to practise this important skill.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy writing:

- Shopping lists
- Thank you letters
- Diaries
- Postcards
- E-mail
- Greetings cards
- Stories and poems
- Spelling practice

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### Helping your child with maths

As with reading and writing, try to make maths as much fun as possible - games, puzzles and jigsaws are a great way to start. It's also important to show how we use maths skills in our everyday lives and to involve your child in this. Identifying problems and solving them can also help your child develop maths skills. If you see him or her puzzling over something, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together. Don't shy away from maths if you didn't like it at school. Try to find new ways to enjoy the subject with your child.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy maths:

- Point out the different shapes to be found around your home.
- Take your child shopping and talk about the quantities and prices of anything you buy.
- Let your child handle money and work out how much things cost.
- Look together for numbers on street signs and car registration plates.
- Baking
- Telling the time